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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/804,743	03/19/2004	Paul S. Lin	26874/04013	8272
24024	7590	02/08/2006	EXAMINER	
CALFEE HALTER & GRISWOLD, LLP			KIM, JOHN	
800 SUPERIOR AVENUE			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
SUITE 1400				3733
CLEVELAND, OH 44114				

DATE MAILED: 02/08/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/804,743	LIN, PAUL S.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	John Kim	3733

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 12-18 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 19 March 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner. Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a). Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3/19/04.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 1-6 and 7-11, drawn to a plate, classified in class 606, subclass 69.
- II. Claims 12-16, drawn to plate system, classified in class 623, subclass 17.11.
- III. Claims 17-18, drawn to method, classified in class 606, subclass 60.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions II and I are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because the cervical implant can be held in place by a bone staple. The subcombination has separate utility such as being used alone, without the implant.

Inventions III and I are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP §

806.05(e)). In this case the method of separating two vertebrae can be performed solely by a spacer.

Inventions III and II are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the method of separating two vertebrae can be performed solely by a spacer.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

During a telephone conversation with Brian Kondas on February 2, 2006 a provisional election was made without traverse to prosecute the invention of I, claims 1-6 and 7-11. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 12-18 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

Information Disclosure Statement

The listing of references in the specification is not a proper information disclosure statement. 37 CFR 1.98(b) requires a list of all patents, publications, or other information submitted for consideration by the Office, and MPEP § 609.04(a) states, "the list may not be incorporated into the specification but must be submitted in a

separate paper." Therefore, unless the references have been cited by the examiner on form PTO-892, they have not been considered.

Drawings

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the "leading edge," "trailing edge," and the "beam," must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

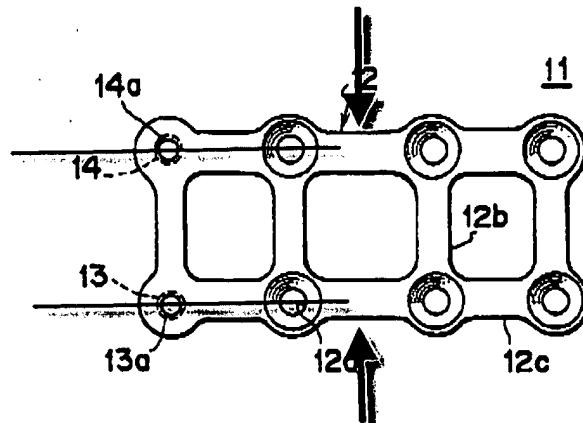
A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1 and 3-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Maruyama et al. (US Pat 5487741).

Regarding claim 1, Maruyama discloses a plate (12) with a first and second apertures (12a) and cleat (13, 14) extending from the interior of the face (col 5:7-17). Regarding claims 3 and 6 and as seen in figure 3, Maruyama discloses the plate to have a reduced width, thus being bowed along the width, (shown below with bold arrows) in the central portion of the plate. Regarding claim 4 and 5, Maruyama discloses of having the cleat (13 and 14) being aligned along a common transverse axis (shown below with thin lines) with the center of the first and second apertures (12a).

FIG. 3



Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

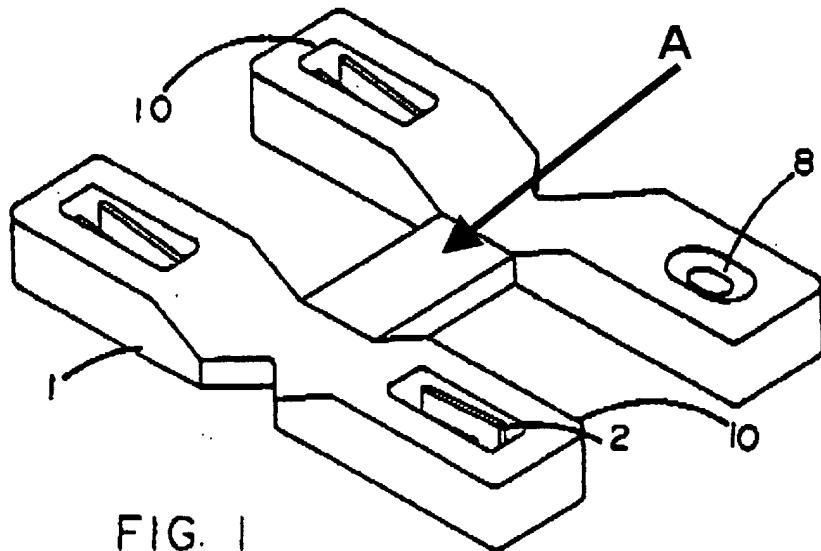
Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maruyama et al. (US Pat 5487741) in view of Warden et al. (US Pat. 5261910).

Maruyama discloses the claimed invention except for having a slot for the first and second apertures. Warden teaches of having a plate with slots (30). This allows the surgeon to place the screws spaced apart from each other on the vertebrae (col 2:2-3). It would have been obvious to one skill in the art at the time the invention was made to construct the plate of Maruyama with slots as the apertures in view of Warden, in order to prevent the limitation of where the screws would be placed on the vertebrae.

Claims 7-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maruyama et al. (US Pat 5487741) in view of Aust et al. (US Pat. 5180381).

Maruyama discloses the plate (12) having an interior and exterior face with at least two apertures (12a) and a cleat (13 or 14) (claim 7), a plate not exceeding 43 mm in length and 12mm in width (col 4:58-64) (claim 9), the cleat is in the form of a conical spike (as seen in figure 1, ref # 3 and 4) (claim 10).

Maruyama fails to teach of having cancellous screws and a beam formed within the plate along the centerline of the plate. Aust discloses a plate with cancellous screws (col 3: 7-12) (claim 7 and 8) and a centerline beam (A, in modified figure below) (claim 11). This allows the plate to be firmly attached to the bone (col 2: 51-58) (claim 7 and 8) and improves the structural stability of the plate. It would have been obvious to one skill in the art at the time the invention was made to construct the plate of Maruyama with cancellous screws and a centerline beam in view of Aust, in order to prevent the plate from being loosened from the bone and provide structural stability to the plate.



Conclusion

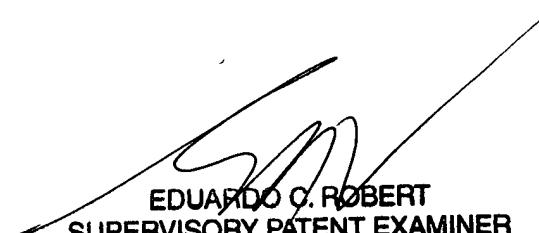
The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. See PTO-892 for art cited of interest.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John Kim whose telephone number is (571) 272-2817. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert can be reached on (571) 272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

JK


EDUARDO C. ROBERT
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER